

### REMARKS

Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1, 5, 18, 21, 28, 29, 31, and 38 have been amended, and claims 6, 7, 27, 32, 33, and 37 have been canceled without prejudice, to more clearly point out the present invention. All the claims presently on file are in condition for allowance, which allowance is earnestly solicited.

### DRAWINGS

The drawings were objected in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d), on the ground that figure 3 is informal. Applicants are enclosing hereto a complete set of Replacement Drawings for approval by the Examiner.

### CLAIM OBJECTIONS

Claims 5, 6, 22, and 32 were objected as containing certain informalities. These informalities have now been addressed.

### CLAIMS REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. 101

Claims 21-30 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 on the ground that claim 21 is directed to a non-statutory subject matter. Applicants have amended claim 21, as recommended by the Examiner, in satisfaction of 35 U.S.C. 101.

### **CLAIMS REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. 101**

Claims 1-6, 8-17, 21, 22, 24-27, 31, 32, and 34-37 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by US Patent No. 6,950,871 to Honma et al.

Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection and submit that this rejection has now become moot in view of the amendment to the claims and the allowability of the claims on file, as presented in the following section.

### **ALLOWABLE CLAIMS**

Applicants thank the Examiner for the conditional allowance of claims 7, 18-20, 23, 28-30, 33, and 38-40. Applicants have now amended the claims on file, to place them in shape for final allowance, as follows:

- Claim 1 has been amended to recite the elements of claims 6 and the allowable claim 7.
- Allowable claim 18 has been amended to recite the elements of claims 1 and 17.
- Claim 21 has been amended to recite the elements of claims 22 and the allowable claim 23.
- Allowable claim 28 has been amended to recite the elements of claims 21 and 27.

- Claim 31 has been amended to recite the elements of claims 32 and the allowable claim 33.
- Allowable claim 38 has been amended to recite the elements of claims 31 and 37.

### CONCLUSION

All the claims presently on file in the present application are in condition for immediate allowance, and such action is respectfully requested. If it is felt for any reason that direct communication would serve to advance prosecution of this case to finality, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Date: January 21, 2007

Respectfully submitted,

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